

TOP SECRET CHESS RUFF

6 January 1964

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Director, Current Intelligence

SUBJECT : Preliminary Evaluation of Photo Recon
Missions 6070, 29 December and 6071
30 December 1963

1. These missions are the first two of a series designed to provide high altitude photography of South Vietnam's borders with Laos and Cambodia. When the series is completed it will provide coverage of 15 miles on either side of the border. Targeting for these missions involved known, or suspect, Viet Cong (VC) infiltration routes, bases, and other military activities. There were no significant items of immediate intelligence value reported. *copy
over
[initials]*

2. An important objective of these flights is the acquisition of baseline photography of the border area described above. For this purpose, the U-2 aircraft utilized for these missions was equipped with an R-112A camera which is normally used on satellite reconnaissance missions. This camera provides excellent ground target resolution in that photography may be enlarged 100 times; however, it is restricted to a 13 mile wide strip. *now!*

3. Twenty-two known and suspect infiltration areas were photographed, but no evidence of any military activity, supply routes or encampments were observed. In addition four suspect staging areas were covered. No evidence of staging areas, supply areas, road construction, or troop concentrations were noted at these suspect locations, however. Three supply areas were also covered, but no significant activity was noted.

4. Airfield coverage included Dong Hoi in North Vietnam, seven fields in Laos, including Tchepone and Attapeu, four fields in Cambodia in the general Snoul-Mimot-Kompong Trach area, and a helicopter pad on the Laos-South Vietnam border. The Cambodian airfields appear to be used by the local plantations. Most of the photographed fields were empty; only two light utility aircraft were noted.

5. The only extensive military complexes, photographed at Gia Nghia and Dak Sut in South Vietnam, belong to the Army of the Republic of South Vietnam (ARVN).

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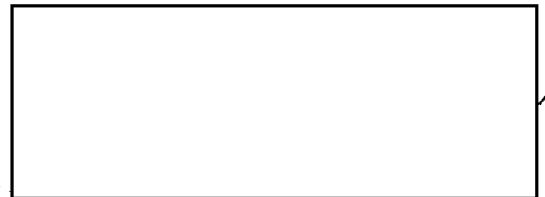
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6. Photography of many of the major roads and trails in the border areas uncovered two convoys; one of 52 trucks headed northeast toward Ha Tinh in North Vietnam on Route 12 and the other of 19 trucks headed south through Ban Na Khang in southern Laos. Several of the trucks in the Laos convoy appeared to be camouflaged with branches.

7. Finally, a large number of strongpoints were photographed throughout the border areas. Most appeared to be on main roads and around airfields. Their triangular shape indicates that they were built by the French before the French pulled out. It is not possible to determine from the photography who controls these strongpoints or even if they are now occupied.

8. These first two missions provided generally excellent photography of the border areas and a few targets of opportunity. However, the small amounts of significant intelligence acquired by these missions seems to confirm our previous experience with high altitude photography over Laos and North Vietnam. As long as the Viet Cong remain a lightly equipped guerrilla force operating from jungle covered bases and supplied over water or by an obscure system of overland trails extending from North Vietnam, we believe that it will be virtually impossible to monitor their activities through the use of overheard photography.

Amen!



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